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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/615,222	07/07/2003	John E. Mercer	DCI-8CIP1C2	8552
21833	7590	06/23/2004	EXAMINER	
PRITZKAU PATENT GROUP, LLC 993 GAPTER ROAD BOULDER, CO 80303				KINDER, DARRELL D
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		2862		

DATE MAILED: 06/23/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/615,222	MERCER ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Darrell Kinder	2862

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 6-20 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 07 July 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 20030707.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference character(s) mentioned in the description: 50 as noted in the specification with reference to Figures 2 and 3 in Paragraph 26 of the specification. Corrected drawing sheets are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Double Patenting

A rejection based on double patenting of the "same invention" type finds its support in the language of 35 U.S.C. 101 which states that "whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process ... may obtain a patent therefor ..." (Emphasis added). Thus, the term "same invention," in this context, means an invention drawn to identical subject matter. See *Miller v. Eagle Mfg. Co.*, 151 U.S. 186 (1894); *In re Ockert*, 245 F.2d 467, 114 USPQ 330 (CCPA 1957); and *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970).

A statutory type (35 U.S.C. 101) double patenting rejection can be overcome by canceling or amending the conflicting claims so they are no longer coextensive in scope. The filing of a terminal disclaimer cannot overcome a double patenting rejection based upon 35 U.S.C. 101.

2. Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claims 43 and 44 of prior U.S. Patent No. 5,757,190 ("190"). This is a double patenting rejection.

Claims 43-44 of '190, which are dependent on claims 38-40, completely encompass the scope of claims 1-2 of the instant application.

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

3. Claim 3 is rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 31 of U.S. Patent No. 5,757,190. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have used a processing arrangement as a means for cooperating with a plurality of detectors, as a processor is old and well known in the art and can be easily adapted to execute a program, or be programmed to, correlate relative changes and then display them to an operator.

4. Claims 3-5 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 38 and 41-42 of U.S. Patent No. 5,757,190. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have used a processing arrangement as means responsive to detector means and monitoring means for the reasons given *supra*. It would have also been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have used a plurality of detectors, coupled with the underground lines, and the transmitter coupled to the boring tool, as it provides the same mode of operation as putting the detector on the tool and the transmitters on the lines, however, it would have been easier to maintain and repair the transmitter, which could be more fragile, if it was on the tool, as opposed to on the underground lines, which are difficult to access.

5. Claims 41-42 of '190 completely encompass the scope of claims 4-5 of the instant application.

6. Claims 6-20 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The prior applications and patents of the inventive entity do not specifically claim, nor does the prior art disclose or fairly suggest a system for tracking the positional relationship between the boring tool and an electrically conductive underground line comprising a transmitter on a boring tool, detectors on the lines, an arrangement to monitor a value relating to the way a drill

string is fed out, wherein the positional relationship between the tool and the lines is established without determining an actual distance and wherein at least one of the lines is in electrically connected or inductively coupled with the detectors, in combination with the rest of the elements of the claims.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Rorden et al. U.S. Patent no. 4,710,708; Draper et al. U.S. Patent no. 5,621,325.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Darrell Kinder whose telephone number is 571- 272-2264. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:00-4:30, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, N. Le can be reached on 571-272-2233. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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DK



JAY PATIDAR
PRIMARY EXAMINER